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CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, INC.

AFFILIATED

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF DAY NURSERIES, INC.

130 EAST TWENTY-SECOND ST., NEW YORK, N. Y.

VOL. XVI, No. 5

BULLETIN

MAY, 1937

Why Conferences?

EDITH L. LAUER

Field Secretary, Jewish Children's Society, Baltimore

THE cry of the conference is heard in the land—and a full-throated chorus it is. Like the cherry blossoms in Washington, it bursts forth every spring and causes just as mighty a migration. One national publication recently come to hand lists twenty-three separate conferences from April to July in one comparatively small section of the country, and exclusive of that mighty Gulliver of all conferences—the National.

But the conference spirit would seem to be always with us. Throughout the year we have conferences—regional conferences, state conferences, inter-state conferences, city conferences, inter-city conferences, departmental conferences and inter-departmental conferences. Conferences on the social sciences, on health, education, mental hygiene, community organization, recreation, personnel problems (that's different from recreation), and the whole range of social services from pre-natal protection to old age pensions and free burial practices. There are conferences to plan conferences, for somehow one seems to beget another, but has there ever been a conference to prevent a conference? Perhaps some day some one will invent a form of conference control with a definitely eugenic purpose.

Think of the tracks beaten to these meetings! Think of the hours, days, weeks, spent in planning them! Think of the word-consumption in the hundreds of papers presented—verbal Niagaras, as one dazed listener called them. Think of all the program making, the engineering feats of dozens of arrangements committees, the varied details of fervid preparation recurring with such unfailing regularity!

WHY conferences? What do we, who go to them with such enthusiasm, hope to get out of them? How do we prepare for them before we go? What do we do when we are there? And what do we bring back with us afterwards?

There are some very real reasons why groups get together as a regular and necessary rite. It may be a hang-over from ancient tribal gatherings when new forces were put into planned motion; it may be the expression of a great need to foregather with one's own kind, in search of sharper tools; it may mean an urge merely to get away from dismal routines and dispiriting realities, in the hope of finding necessary replenishment of conviction and courage. All are eminently worth while as motives that may influence frequently unwilling boards of directors to make appropriations for staff attendance, or may drive us into that state, half pride, half self-pity, of going on our own.

Then comes the round of sessions—the effort to select wisely and to attend only those that relate best to our needs and interests. We like to gasp in awed amazement at the clarity and vigor of our leaders as they deliver their challenging papers, or, better still,

(Continued on page 8)

For the First Time.

THIS year James Fitzgerald, executive secretary of The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Detroit—a member agency of the Child Welfare League of America—is serving as president of the National Conference of Catholic Charities. Mr. Fitzgerald is the first professional social worker to be elected to this office, which has previously been filled by a member of the clergy or, in a few instances, by a layman.

The 1937 meeting of the Conference will be held in St. Paul, August 29 to September 1. It is hoped that this year more professional workers, both Catholic and non-Catholic, and also lay people, will attend.

Child Welfare Planning—Twenty-five Years Later

THE U. S. Children's Bureau asked four of its advisory committees to meet in Washington on April 7 and 8, 1937. These included the general advisory committee on maternal and child welfare services, with Dr. Kenneth D. Blackfan, Boston, as chairman, and three special advisory committees on maternal and child health services, services for crippled children, and community child welfare services.

On April 8, at the Hotel Mayflower, Washington, there was a dinner in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the U. S. Children's Bureau. Miss Belle Sherwin was chairman of the sponsoring committee and Mrs. Dorothy Kirchwey Brown was toastmistress. The speakers were William L. Chenery, Senator James J. Davis, Miss Grace Abbott, Dr. Kenneth D. Blackfan, The Hon. Frances Perkins, and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Response for the Children's Bureau was made by Miss Katharine F. Lenroot, its present Chief, who has been identified with the Children's Bureau almost from the beginning. Miss Lenroot was president of the National Conference of Social Work in 1935, and has served as a director of the Child Welfare League of America. She has long been recognized in the field of both public and private child welfare as a wise leader and helpful counsellor. Probably no other Government agency could have evoked so large and representative a gathering as the one that attended this twenty-fifth anniversary dinner.

There was a message from Miss Lillian D. Wald, an original sponsor over twenty-five years ago of the proposal to establish a children's bureau in the Department of Labor.

A very informing, readable, and interesting account of "The Children's Bureau—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," has recently been issued and can be secured from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., for 10 cents. The introduction to this report states, "Created by Act of Congress, the Children's Bureau was the first public agency in the world the function of which was to consider as a whole the conditions, problems, and welfare of childhood."

ON April 9 and 10, in response to a call from the U. S. Children's Bureau, there was held a series of meetings attended by leaders of child welfare work in various sections of the country. The purpose of these meetings was to coordinate some of the thinking developing out of the activity of the many public

and private child welfare agencies represented and to formulate policies for achieving the most adequate services.

The discussion was based on the following premises:

(1) In every State there should be a comprehensive program of child welfare. Extension of both public and private services is necessary in many areas where adequate resources for case work and foster care do not now exist. Private agencies operating under approved standards should have the fullest opportunity for development. The development of good public service should be fostered by good private service.

(2) A program for child welfare should include facilities for home conservation, child protection, and appropriate forms of care for *all* children in need—dependent, neglected, delinquent, and handicapped.

(3) Adequate community provision for family relief and service should be promoted as a foundation for a child welfare program.

The following points were covered in the discussion: Scope of State and local public child welfare activities, contribution of private child welfare organizations, and cooperation between public and private agencies.

It was the sense of the meeting that many of the questions raised in the discussion could not be decided in final form, inasmuch as new programs are developing which will have to be adapted to varying conditions and stages of progress. It was agreed, however, that certain statements could be made representing the trends of thought at the present time, and that such statements might be of service in guiding development in the immediate future. A report on the discussion of these points was prepared and approved by the meeting.

In connection with care for dependent and neglected children, the trend is toward localization in county units and away from centralization in state welfare departments, although state supervision and leadership are essential. A most significant recommendation is that transfer of children from their own homes to institutions or foster homes, and the reverse, must be handled on the basis of the most skilled case work services. Again, private agency services to children should be canvassed carefully, especially with reference to extending them to rural areas.

League Directory Change

MINNESOTA—Minneapolis: The Washburn Home. Mrs. Anne Starks Monachesi, Executive Director.

Program of CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

INDIANAPOLIS, MAY 24 TO 28, 1937

during

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

EDWIN D. SOLENBERGER, *Chairman*

Monday, May 24

2.00 P. M.—3.30 P. M., COLUMBIA CLUB

Presiding: THE REV. BRYAN J. McENTEGART, *Director*, Division of Children, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York.
Child Welfare and the Social Security Act.

Main Issues Arising in Children's Field from Effects of Social Security Act.

KATHARINE F. LENROOT, *Chief*, Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

Tuesday, May 25

2.00 P. M.—3.30 P. M., COLUMBIA CLUB

Presiding: ORA PENDLETON, *Executive Secretary*, The Children's Bureau of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Child Adoption and Illegitimacy.

1. Interrelationship Between Illegitimacy and Adoption.

AGNES K. HANNA, *Director*, Social Service Division, Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

2. First Steps Toward Responsibility by Children's Agencies in Child Adoption.

MARGARET G. BOURNE, *Consultant*, Cuyahoga County Probate Court, Cleveland, Ohio.

4.00 P. M.—5.30 P. M.

(Joint Session with the Social Work Publicity Council. Listed in full on their program.)

Current Experience in Child Welfare Publicity.

6.00 P. M.: DELEGATES' DINNER MEETING, COLUMBIA CLUB

For representatives of member agencies of Child Welfare League of America, and officers and directors of the League. (This meeting is the only one scheduled which is not open to the public.)

Wednesday, May 26

1.00 P. M.: LUNCHEON, COLUMBIA CLUB

(Joint Session with the National Federation of Day Nurseries.)

Presiding: EDWIN D. SOLENBERGER, *President*, Child Welfare League of America.

Participation of Social Workers in the Life of the Community.

SOLOMON LOWENSTEIN, *Executive Vice-President*, Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies of New York City, and President-Elect, National Conference of Social Work, 1938.

Thursday, May 27

11.00 A. M.—12.30 P. M.

(Joint Session with Section I—Social Case Work, Group Meeting 3. Listed in full on their program.)

The Role of Substitute Parenthood.

2.00 P. M.—3.30 P. M., COLUMBIA CLUB

This meeting has been arranged to supplement the program of Section I—Social Case Work, Group Meeting 3, Thursday, May 27,

11.00 A. M.—12.30 P. M.

Presiding: JACOB KEPECS, *Superintendent*, Jewish Home Finding Society of Chicago, Illinois.

Values in Foster Care for the Difficult Child.

1. In Foster Families.

ALFRED F. WHITMAN, *Executive Secretary*, Children's Aid Association, Boston, Massachusetts.

2. In Institutions.

A. ETHEL BARGER, *Superintendent*, Milwaukee Orphans' Asylum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

7.00 P. M.: DINNER, COLUMBIA CLUB

Annual Meeting.

Presiding: EDWIN D. SOLENBERGER, *President*, Child Welfare League of America.

1. Mental Hygiene—Its Place in the Child Welfare Program.

DR. GEORGE S. STEVENSON, *Director*, Division of Community Clinics, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, New York City.

2. Report of Executive Director.

C. C. CARSTENS, *Executive Director*, Child Welfare League of America.

Friday, May 28

9.00 A. M.—10.30 A. M.

(Attention is called to Section I—Social Case Work, Group Meeting 3. Listed in full on their program.)

Case Work in an Authoritarian Setting.

3.00 P. M.—4.30 P. M.

(Joint Session with the Church Conference of Social Work. Listed in full on their program.)

Child Health Problems—Rural and Urban.

3.00 P. M.—4.30 P. M.

Group Discussion 1, Athenaeum, Gymnasium

Psychiatric Services for Children's Agencies and Institutions.

Discussion Leader: GRACE H. DICKS, *Director of Case Work*, Children's Bureau of Cleveland, Ohio.

Group Discussion 2, Athenaeum, Parlor

Relation Between Family and Children's Agencies.

Discussion Leader: ABIGAIL F. BROWNELL, *Director*, County Agency Department, Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Group Discussion 3, Athenaeum, Blue Room

The Board Member's Function.

Discussion Leader: GERTRUDE TAGGART, *Member*, Board of Directors, Child Welfare League of America, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Group Discussion 4, Claypool Hotel, Palm Room

(Joint Session with the National Federation of Day Nurseries.)

Place of the Day Nursery in a Child Welfare Program.

Discussion Leader: MARCELLA FARRAR, *Child Welfare Department*, School of Applied Social Sciences, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

Group Discussion 5, Lincoln Hotel, Lincoln Room

Training of Children's Agency Personnel

Discussion Leader: LOIS A. WILDY, *Instructor*, Department of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

Studying Day Nursery Intake

MILDRED SAWYER

(The following report was presented at the Twentieth Biennial Conference of the National Federation of Day Nurseries on April 9, 1937, by Miss Mildred Sawyer, Chairman of the Study Committee and a Board member of both Manhattanville Day Nursery, New York, and the Association of Day Nurseries of New York City.)

ADMISSION policies in day nurseries in this country at present range all the way from one in a large city where a child may be left for the day quite casually while its mother goes shopping—and no questions asked, not even his last name—to one in another city where a group of nurseries have a central office at which all applicants for any of these nurseries apply for admission, and where all interviewing and case work are handled by a supervisor and four case workers. In between these two extremes there are a variety of procedures. Some nurseries have their own case worker, some “borrow” one from a case working agency, and sometimes one is shared by two or more nurseries. In some instances the admission policy is clearly thought out and has been put down in black and white (which does not mean it need be any the less flexible); in others, it is in mind only, in which case (depending upon the mind or variety of minds) it may be equally clear or not so clear.

In 1933 the board of directors of the New York Association of Day Nurseries appointed a committee to make a study of intake in day nurseries in co-operation with the Charity Organization Society. The depression did one very good thing. We all began to question the fundamental values of the work in which we were interested, and, in cutting our work sometimes, but not our vision, we began to be more particular as to our function in relation to other agencies in the welfare field. We realized that each agency is set up primarily to give a special kind of service. Therefore, we needed to define clearly all the aspects of the family problems at the time of admission and weigh admissions in terms of our special function, the family problem, and the services available from other agencies in the community. Looking at the question of admission in terms of the child alone, rather than in terms of the family as a whole, was no longer adequate. This meant then that more and more the day nursery, the family and other agencies should supplement each other and work out the closest kind of understanding and co-ordination.

Three nurseries co-operated in the study with the

district offices of the Charity Organization Society. In order not to overtax the Association office where this was one of many activities, we worked with one nursery at a time.

In each case a committee was appointed consisting of a board member from that nursery, the superintendent and case worker, where there was one; the C. O. S. district secretary and her assistant; the executive secretary of the Association, and the chairman of the Intake Study Committee. This group met at approximately bi-monthly intervals, the first meeting in each instance being held when a sufficient number of applications had accumulated for discussion and analysis. The number of applications varied with each nursery, and there were, of course, some individual problems. One nursery had a long waiting list as there is no other in that part of the city, and a definite need.

At first the applicants were interviewed by a member of the nursery staff in the usual way, but we found that this did not give us sufficient information nor would it be uniform for all the nurseries. Therefore, after the first few cases had been discussed an arrangement was made whereby a member of the staff from the district office of the family agency was called by telephone and either came to the nursery at that time, or an appointment was made at a time convenient to the applicant. If the case was an emergency one, it was always handled at once by the nursery staff.

However, one of the things we learned was that an appointment system, where the applicant and the nursery reserved a definite time for the interview, proved more satisfactory to both and brought surprisingly pleasing results in that neither person felt so hurried and both were given a better opportunity for constructive understanding. After all, each step of the way should be a partnership between the client and the nursery. The worker from the family agency always considered herself for the time being as a member of the nursery staff. We have been asked whether this was a complication, and so far as I know it never was. Copies of all interviews were sent to each member of the committee and carefully studied before each conference.

Our object was to sum up the needs of the whole family and decide which agencies could answer them

(Continued on page 6)

BULLETIN

Published monthly (omitted in July and August) as the official organ of the Child Welfare League of America and the National Federation of Day Nurseries.

C. C. CARSTENS, Editor
FLORENCE M. PHARO, Assistant Editor

The Bulletin is in large measure a Forum for discussion in print of child welfare problems. Endorsement does not necessarily go with the printing of opinions expressed over a signature.

Annual subscription, \$1.00 Single copies, 10c.
Checks payable to Child Welfare League of America, Inc.

A Glorious May Day

LAUDATORY telegrams, letters, resolutions of commendation, newspaper clippings, and oral comments have been flowing into headquarters of the Child Welfare League of America with regard to the master program carried from New York and Hollywood over the coast-to-coast network of Columbia Broadcasting System on May Day, National Child Health Day.

In fact, if adverse opinions exist, they are being kept secret. It seems that the program achieved a common denominator of interest for both the uninitiated and persons dyed-in-the-wool professionally, and that it synchronized effectively with local celebrations regardless of locality. In other words, it "rang the bell," and organizations of all kinds—child welfare, family welfare, community chests and councils of social agencies, Junior Leagues, health and medical groups, and many others—are expressing a desire for the ringing of more such bells nationally to assist them in the mobilization of interest and understanding.

One of the most successful gatherings that shared in the broadcast was held in New Orleans, under the sponsorship of the Junior League. Over 600 persons were present, and the representation of forty welfare organizations at their meeting demonstrated the unifying influence of such a celebration. Newspaper stories and art extended over many columns.

Another city that achieved generous space in newspapers was Wilmington, Delaware—with full pages from which children looked forth upon the readers. Some of the most enthusiastic responses have come, however, from towns or hamlets, where national newspaper releases and mats are especially welcome.

In the grand ballroom of New York's Waldorf-Astoria, where the "master broadcast luncheon" was held by the Child Welfare League of America, in

cooperation with the U. S. Children's Bureau and many other organizations, there was a truly gala spirit. Even the small girls with May baskets who went from table to table giving flowers—and to the dais where Mrs. James Roosevelt, Sr., and other prominent persons were seated—are still talking about the happy time they had at the party.

Paul Cornell, chairman of board, American Association of Advertising Agencies, and member of board of directors, Child Welfare League of America, presided. Edwin C. Hill, writer and news commentator, served as master of ceremonies on the broadcast, and David Ross, as announcer. Those on the broadcast were: Rose Bampton, Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano; Joe E. Brown, screen and radio star; Paul Cornell; Kendall Emerson, M.D., president, National Tuberculosis Association, and member, board of directors, National Health Council; Joe Penner, by radio from Hollywood; Robert L. Ripley, "Believe It or Not"; Irene Wicker, "The Singing Lady"; Leo Reisman and his Waldorf-Astoria Orchestra; and Pietro Yon at the organ, organist, St. Patrick's Cathedral and the Vatican.

Following the broadcast, three-minute messages were given by: The Hon. David C. Adie, Commissioner of Social Welfare, State of New York; Mrs. Sidney C. Borg, chairman, advisory committee on welfare, World's Fair, Inc.; The Hon. William Hodson, Commissioner of Welfare, City of New York; The Hon. John L. Rice, M.D., Commissioner of Health, City of New York; Edwin D. Solenberger, president, Child Welfare League of America; and twelve-year-old Master Gerald Schoenfeld, representing C. H. Watson, M.D., president, National Safety Councils.

And the next day the newspapers carried the news that the twelve-year-old boy had "stolen the show." He did. But we are assured that in his school, where he is a "judge," there is so much competition that his success was all in the day's work. On the dais he sat with Bob Ripley on one side, and, on the other, Joe E. Brown, who had come all the way from Hollywood with Mrs. Brown just to participate in the celebration at the Waldorf.

(While Joe E. Brown was in New York he umpired a baseball game between boys of Manhattan and boys of Brooklyn—arranged by the Boys Clubs of America, through the cooperation of the Child Welfare League of America.)

The staging of such a national radio program, with arrangements for its reception throughout the country, as well as a master gathering, requires both courage

and funds. It is axiomatic that the former is found more freely in Nature than the latter.

One of the factors involved in a nation-wide or coast-to-coast broadcast is the autonomy of local radio stations embraced in the network of a broadcasting system. The response of radio stations to the plea sent to them by the Child Welfare League of America to carry the May Day program has been termed phenomenal. Even so, with the best wishes in the world, a few stations could not waive certain prior commitments.

In view of the fact that the program—the commercial value of which would run into many thousands of dollars—was contributed in behalf of American childhood, and in view of the fact that it aided communities throughout the country, the actual cost of “ringing the bell” was infinitesimal. To a social agency, however, even a small investment usually represents a problem in higher mathematics. The question is, if communities want such national service as has been demonstrated—and evidently they do—how can it be most advantageously financed?

Can We Agree With Our Agreement?

GRACE W. REDDING

Assistant Director, The Cleveland Humane Society

THE questions raised by Miss Mary Frances Smith's article on “Performing Service for One Another” in the March BULLETIN of the Child Welfare League of America provoke thought. The need for a redefinition of the function of inter-society service accompanies the growing change of concepts of the tasks of children's agencies.

With 170 members of the League, some new and some old, organized to serve children by placing in foster family homes or institutions, as agencies to prevent cruelty, as public boards covering many services in State or county, or as private agencies practicing a high quality of case work with a small number of children, we have many differing points of view. The exchange of inquiries with agencies not of League membership adds to the field of dissimilarities in concepts the need for wisdom in choice of approach, and content of inquiry or reply.

The quality of adaptability is most necessary in the agency receiving “Plaint No. 963” from a London agency asking us to locate here the missing father of a family languishing in County Mayo “ready to receive him with open arms any time he returns,”

but needing “warning as to his callous neglect”; or the complicated situation of a father of six children, wards of a court in a distant county, who has just located in our territory with a new young wife, without work, but wanting his children.

A larger number of requests come to our agency from non-League members. Perhaps a local arrangement is partly responsible for this. In reviewing functions with agencies in the family field we agreed that inquiries regarding the possible placement of children with relatives involved skills most often used by workers in the children's field—adapting children to a new environment in homes not their own. We are therefore acting contrary to Article IV. 2 of the Agreement (Directory of Members, Child Welfare League of America, 1937, pp. 4-5) which refers letters to fellow members in their own field; but perhaps No. 4 in the same article allows operation of “judgment.” We also make investigations for the Cuyahoga County Child Welfare Board, as this comparatively recently formed public agency has not yet set up a full investigation service.

The point Miss Smith makes on “blanket supervision” in the Inter-Society Agreement brings out the conflict children's case workers are in over some of our past concepts of function. The quality of supervision achieved when both worker and client participate is of course our goal, and we are frustrated when trying to carry out the letter of an agreement which is in reality impossible. But the approach to the family or relatives who are to receive children placed by another agency can be made in such a way that a sharing process in supervision is the same as in our own placements. This often happens in cases of children placed for adoption where at first the family rejects “interference” but a year's supervision is a legal requirement as well as one of agency practice. A recent illustration was placement of twins by an out-of-the-State agency with a family whose home we studied at their request and who accepted us during the period of supervision and felt us a god-send when a sudden, fatal illness of the foster father left the foster mother unable to care for the children.

On the other hand, we are often unwilling factors in a situation where our services are not understood or wanted. The child who comes to our community in spite of our recommendation (perhaps without the consent of the other agency) creates a problem not infrequent, and one which keeps us weighing our responsibility for action. If we sense the impossibility of supervision before the decision to place the child is made, it seems to me we have the right to refuse sharing in the plan. After other members of

the League have contributed their thinking, possibly a change of phraseology in the whole agreement might be considered. We are grateful to Miss Smith for calling to our attention the need for clarifying our thinking on this subject and integrating it with the newer concepts of case work philosophy.

Studying Day Nursery Intake

(Continued from page 3)

best. Disposition of these cases was always left with the nursery staff as usual. It was their records only which were discussed at future conferences. In other words, if we felt a different decision might have been wiser, nothing was done retro-actively; we merely stored up the experience for the future.

The total number of families studied was 74; the total number of children in those families was 118, for 96 of whom nursery care was asked.

We found that the cases divided themselves into three groups: Those who needed nursery care only; those needing nursery care and the service of a family or other agency (these we called *joint* cases); and those for whom nursery care would not be the best answer to the problem. About 21 per cent needed nursery care only.

When nurseries were first started, it was to take care of the child or children of the working mother. Now, we find a variety of reasons for accepting children in a day nursery and the flexibility in meeting them may prove the necessity, or not, of a day nursery in the community set-up in the future. In 58 of the cases studied both parents were at home. In 35 cases, both parents were working. We had to bear in mind the serious marital problems emphasized by the depression, such as the husband whose self-confidence was undermined because he could not get work when his wife could, and who felt he must be free to look for work rather than stay at home as nurse to the children. There were marital difficulties in 34 per cent of these families, and though the services of the family agency may not always be required, we are convinced that they could be helpful to many more families than we have referred to them in the past. To give you one example:

The X family were on Home Relief. There were two children under two years of age. The husband had been unemployed and was considering going back into the Army, provided his wife would give her permission, which is required if married men enlist. His wife felt that if she could get work she could make

more than the Home Relief allowance and at the same time lessen her husband's urge for the Army. The nursery suggested that they could take turns looking for employment so that one of them could stay at home and look after the children. There were no vacancies at the time. If work was found and nursery care still seemed necessary, they could make another application. The family agency questioned whether these parents did not need consultation and advice on their family problems. There seemed to be an indication of such a need, because the husband was evidently growing discouraged and as a result was considering enlisting in the Army, showing a desire to get away from the family situation. This might result in the breaking up of the home; therefore consultation with the family agency at this moment might be able to stop this disintegrating process as well as aid the family until employment was found.

The discussions helped us to become more sensitive to this kind of reasoning and aware of ramifications in a seemingly simple problem. It made us aware also of the varied information needed to see what the fundamental problem was in situations where more stereotyped questions and answers might seem to require only a simple "yes" or "no" to the request for nursery care. We realized too that it is not advisable, quite aside from spiritual values the importance of which we take for granted, for any mother to go to work when she would make less than the cost, to the community, of the care of her children in a nursery. We must, increasingly, look at the cost of welfare work, as well as standards of work, from the point of view of the community as a whole—not just from the point of view of the nursery.

We each know the work, as well as the problems, of the other agency much better since making this study and find it much easier to consult with each other—making the way of the "joint" case just that much smoother. These 74 families alone involved contacts with 27 different agencies and groups.

Of course, we raised a great many more questions than we could possibly answer. Here are a few. Probably some of you have been thinking along these lines:

Should families needing short-time service, or those needing long-time care, be given preference?

Should less needy cases be dropped from the nursery to make room for more needy ones?

Should the nursery be used for children needing group contacts or training of some kind when they come from families not in real economic need? This brings up questions of community needs as well as

questions of policy. Few communities can offer adequate facilities to parents with young children, under school age, needing all day care (nursery schools usually give part-time care), who, for some reason need training either for a specific problem or in group activity, especially if they cannot pay a full fee.

Can the nursery do a constructive job in its work of character building if a child comes intermittently rather than regularly?

Should the nursery take those cases first, having decided they are nursery cases, where there is the greatest economic need, even if it is felt that in some other family the opportunity for lasting help is greater?

Does the nursery take a short or long view as to the results it hopes to attain?

How far should the responsibility of the nursery go in following up cases referred elsewhere? How much time can the nursery be expected to give them?

BUT we *have* learned, once again, the importance of thorough case work (which implies the long view) at the time of application and later, and how much time it will save in the long run both for the families and ourselves . . . the necessity of clearing through the Social Service Exchange (when there is one) and getting in touch with other participating agencies before making our decision . . . how necessary wise referral is in every instance (one family had had contact with five different nurseries before their last application as well as public and private agencies) . . . the fundamental necessity of a quiet place in which to hold the interview and time allotted which will be free from interruptions. When these factors are absent so much has to be undone later on that we wonder how and why we dared to hurry in the earlier stages, or ever to think short cuts were warranted.

In conclusion, we feel that what we ourselves, in each unit, have learned is just as important as the statistics compiled—which may be obtained from the office at any time by all those who are disappointed at my not including them. One nursery, especially, has called on the family agency more often than before. All of us find we have profited by having for months given an adequate amount of time and thought to each application. Even though we cannot always do so, and are no more than ever cognizant of the need, our thinking is clearer, and the tendency is toward making the time by hook or by crook for thorough and uninterrupted interviews.

This all seems elementary, I know, but it is also

essential in any consideration of the subject of admissions.

Financial Statement of the League

For the Fiscal Year January 1 to December 31, 1936

RECEIPTS

Russell Sage Foundation.....	\$9,530.00
Contributions and Organization Quotas.....	36,984.06
Reimbursement for Services, and Other Refunds....	5,464.19
Agency Membership Dues.....	3,512.50
Publications.....	2,568.95
Miscellaneous.....	467.66
TOTAL CURRENT RECEIPTS.....	\$58,527.36
Loan.....	2,500.00
Foreign Support Cases.....	403.87
Amount on hand January 1, 1936.....	516.20
	\$61,947.43

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	
Service Staff.....	\$21,312.27
Clerical Staff.....	7,288.40
Office Expense	
Rent.....	2,682.55
Telephone and Telegraph.....	960.50
Stationery and Supplies.....	496.56
Office Equipment.....	292.95
Postage.....	1,044.56
Educational and Finance Work	
Special Projects.....	9,906.48
Salaries.....	1,178.41
Printing and Multigraphing.....	5,556.82
Library.....	150.62
Travel and Maintenance	
Regular.....	5,124.60
Special.....	890.98
Conferences.....	1,245.22
Miscellaneous	
Audit and Insurance.....	206.04
Contributions to Organizations.....	338.70
Miscellaneous.....	501.01
TOTAL CURRENT DISBURSEMENTS.....	\$59,176.67
Repayment of Loan.....	2,000.00
Revolving Funds.....	200.00
Foreign Support Cases.....	403.87
Amount on hand December 31, 1936.....	166.89
	\$61,947.43

Audited by Byrnes and Baker

National Conference of Social Work

ENCLOSED with this issue of the BULLETIN is the program of meetings to be held by the Child Welfare League of America during the National Conference of Social Work, Indianapolis, May 24 to 28.

Why Conferences?

(Continued from page 1)

and perhaps all too rarely, as they conduct a stirring debate. We like to sit at the feet of wisdom and experience with crowded notebook and busy pencil as some of the more esoteric secrets of the laboratory are revealed, and we respond with eager optimism, envy, or despair, according to our temperaments and our own laboratory facilities. We like the more intimate discussions with kindred spirits in convivial fashion over a secluded table, or on a stiff cross-country walk. Here we can freely express ourselves in a comforting exchange of some of our fears and anxieties and somehow they thus become less formidable and burdening.

But whether we dwell on the minutiae of technique, on philosophical musings, or on the more dramatic appeal of social action, we make ourselves liable to that sudden slump in enthusiasm and curiosity, that sickening sense of bewilderment—the *conference blues*. And if we are young and inexperienced, the attack is likely to be the more insidious.

Perhaps the curricula of the schools will some day include "What Every Social Worker Should Know About Conferences," for sooner or later we must learn how to avoid these results of intellectual gluttony.

It must be learned that ideas, no matter how carefully analyzed and developed, no matter how brilliantly presented, cease to register after the third hour, when they gush forth from a series of long papers delivered one after the other in quick succession. Small wonder that we sometimes escape to the movies or the country club.

We revel in the opportunity of seeing our leaders at first hand, in catching the glow and force of these more dynamic personalities as they speak, but frequently the very profusion creates a sense of deprivation. One paper "follows hard upon another's heels" with such amazing richness of content that the average listener is hard put to it to follow, much less to relate it to some of the pressing problems he brings with him. He finds himself yearning for some challenging discussion on this or that controversial point. He is sure there are many questions that only these clear thinkers and fearless pioneers can thrash through. But the gavel falls on the introduction of another speaker and, frustrated, the listener must subside and try to orient himself to another paper, perhaps on a totally different subject and equally as

brilliant and provocative. So it goes on through the morning until we adjourn for lunch.

Obviously, not all papers can nor should be discussed. Nor is a free-for-all discussion to be recommended as a steady conference diet. But those for whom the stimulation of a conference—any conference—should not be spread too thinly will remember gratefully some of the smaller meetings that provided a wisely "controlled environment," skillfully manipulated for the immediate development of ideas and for their practical application to specific problems.

Our friends in the field of progressive education have developed this art notably and we do well when we follow their example—even when we go to their conferences.

Aside from the larger stimuli, aside from the valuable and lasting results of developing new forces and plans for more general action, perhaps we should be mindful that each one carries some small threads of his own to the conferences he attends. Thereby a more or less complex, and often bewildering, but priceless tapestry is produced. We should be prepared to select and draw from it such threads as will strengthen the fibre of our own. We should carry them back to strengthen the warp and woof of our services with their new color and vitality.

But do we, who plan conferences and attend them, always make this possible?

League Is Enrolling "Associates"

JUDGING by the response from organizations that wish to become "Associates," the League's recent offer has been something long wished for. New memberships are coming in daily, and our information service is working overtime to keep pace with requests.

On the basis of \$10.00 per year, an organization—or an individual, for that matter—may receive our bulletins monthly, special studies as issued, and other publications. Along with that is the privilege of consultation by mail or at the League office.

This is something quite apart from regular membership in the League, but many are availing themselves of the offer as a step toward becoming full-fledged members. Full information concerning this may be obtained by writing the League office, or at our booth at the National Conference of Social Work, Indianapolis, May 24 to 28.

—ERNEST H. COLE, Extension Secretary,
Child Welfare League of America